

# COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



The success of the annual Sturgis Motorcycle Rally requires many megawatts of power provided by member-owned electric cooperatives, including lighting the main stage at the Buffalo Chip

*Photo by Travel South Dakota*

## The Rally

**Keeping the Sturgis Rally juiced up**  
Pages 8-9

**High-flying fun at Catfish Bay**  
Pages 12-13



# MINUTES OF THE SEVENTIETH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE MEMBERSHIP OF OAHE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

## September 18, 2021

The seventieth annual meeting of the members of the Oahe Electric Cooperative, Inc. (hereinafter called the Cooperative) was held at the school in Onida, Sully County South Dakota on the 18th day of September 2021, pursuant to provisions of the bylaws and upon notice having been given by the secretary to all of the members of the Cooperative.

The polls were declared open by the cooperative attorneys Larson and Hegge at 5pm.

Staff reports were printed on the annual meeting programs along with the 2020 financials. Director candidate speeches for Ken Gillaspie, Brandon Haag, Blaine Livermont, Ross Sperry and Troy Wiebe were also printed.

Cooperative attorneys Larson & Hegge declared the polls closed promptly at 7pm.

The business meeting was called to order at 7pm by President Jim Feller, who presided.

President Feller declared a quorum with 300 members present.

The invocation was performed by Pastor John Fette.

On behalf of the cooperative, Vice President Kirk Yackley presented Years of Service awards to the following individuals: Tory Smith, Lineman, 20 years; and Megan Jaeger, Billing Clerk, 10 years.

Secretary Ross Sperry presented the Proof of Mailing and the Count of Membership (2,106) on the date of the annual meeting.

President Feller called for approval, without reading, of the minutes of the annual meeting of October 3, 2020. These minutes were printed in the annual meeting

programs. A motion was duly made and seconded that the reading of the minutes of October 3, 2020, be waived and that the minutes be approved. Motion carried.

In video presentations Office Manager Marso reported on how the cooperative has both changed and stayed the same over the past twenty years, as well as the financial condition of the cooperative. Operations Manager Eldridge introduced our line department and reported on the projects they have worked on in the last year, and Members Services Manager Hohn talked about cooperatives giving back to their communities, both here and abroad.

General Manager Jordan Lamb then took the podium, introduced himself and reported on the cooperative, as well as the SPP, East River Electric Power Cooperative and Basin Electric Power Cooperative.

President Feller called for new business, there was none, after which he called for unfinished business, which there was none of either.

At this time Cooperative Attorney David Larson announced the two successful candidates of the board election: Brandon Haag and Ross Sperry.

There being no further business to come before the meeting, upon a motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned.

### NOTICE:

Oahe Electric Cooperative's annual meeting is accessible to the handicapped. If special assistance is needed, please contact Oahe Electric Cooperative, Inc., P.O. Box 216, Blunt SD 57522 or call 1-800-640-6243.

## Official Notice: Annual Meeting of the Members of Oahe Electric Cooperative, Inc.

The annual meeting of the members of Oahe Electric Cooperative, Inc. will be held at the Sully Buttes High School in Onida, S.D., as well as drive thru locations in Blunt, S.D., and Pierre, S.D., from 3 p.m. to 5:45 p.m. on **August 20, 2022**, to take action on the following matters:

1. Review of the minutes of the previous meeting.
2. Presentation and consideration of reports, officers, directors and committees.
3. Election of directors.

In conjunction with the election of directors, for a term of three years, the following members have been nominated for director by petition, pursuant to the bylaws:

For term of three years:

- **James Feller, Blunt, S.D.**
- **Troy Wiebe, Pierre, S.D.**

4. All other business that may properly come before the meeting

**COOPERATIVE  
CONNECTIONS**

**Oahe Electric**

(USPS No. 019-042)

**Board of Directors:**

James Feller – Vice President  
605.962.6207  
Brandon Haag – Assistant Secretary  
605.215.6758  
Ryan Noyes – Treasurer  
605.280.3500  
Ross Sperry – Secretary  
605.280.7770  
Kirk Yackley – President  
605.258.2412

**Employees:**

Tyler Arbach – Journeyman Lineman  
Mark Bruning – Line Foreman  
Matt Eldridge – Operations Manager  
Trudie Feldman – Custodian  
Brady Gaer – Journeyman Lineman  
Sidney Geigle – Journeyman Lineman  
Duane Hjelm – Journeyman Lineman  
Sam Irvine – Office Services  
Megan Jaeger – Billing Clerk  
Jordan Lamb – General Manager  
Dan Lettau – Journeyman Lineman  
Steve Long – Material/Work Order/AMR Agent  
Valerie Marso – Office Manager  
Tory Smith – Journeyman Lineman

Oahe Electric Cooperative Connections is published monthly by Oahe Electric Cooperative, Inc., PO Box 216, 102 S. Canford, Blunt, SD 57522, for its members. Families subscribe to Oahe Electric Cooperative Connections as part of their electric cooperative membership. Oahe Electric Cooperative Connections' purpose is to provide reliable, helpful information to Oahe Electric Cooperative members on matters pertaining to rural electrification and better rural living. Subscription information: Electric cooperative members devote 50 cents from their monthly electric payments for a subscription. Nonmember subscriptions are available for \$12 annually. Periodicals Postage Paid at Blunt, SD 57522 and at additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Oahe Electric Cooperative Connections, PO Box 216, Blunt, SD 57522-0216; telephone (605) 962-6243; fax (605) 962-6306; e-mail oahe@oaheelectric.com; www.oaheelectric.com

**Our Mission**

Oahe Electric delivers high quality, low-cost electric service to our local member-owners. As a Touchstone Energy® Cooperative, we are committed to meeting the highest standards of customer satisfaction. We do business with accountability, integrity, innovation and commitment to community. As an electric co-op, we are part of America's most trusted network of high quality energy providers.

# A Note on Cooperative Democracy

As a cooperative, Oahe Electric operates as a representative democracy – meaning that the members of the cooperative control its governance through their election of the cooperative's board of directors. State law provides that in all matters put to a vote of the members, each member has and is limited to one vote. While this concept seems simple and nearly everyone agrees with it, applying the rule can have some unexpected twists.

These occur in two principal areas: (1) voting by corporations and other entities and (2) voting by husbands and wives. Voting by corporations and other entities, including partnerships, LLCs, rural churches and cemetery associations, presents a problem because these entities of necessity must designate an individual to vote on their behalf. This creates a potential of conflicting with the one-member, one-vote rule if a single person attempts to vote more than one membership – if allowed it would have the undemocratic effect of allowing one individual to hold and vote multiple ballots.

To prevent that, the one-member, one-vote rule has long been interpreted to limit each individual to one ballot only. Entities wishing to vote are required to designate as voting representative an individual who would not otherwise intend to vote. Although there may have been

some confusion about this in the past, this one-person, one-vote rule will be adhered to in the future at all cooperative elections.

In part, the purpose of this article is to provide members advance notice so that any entities desiring to vote will have the opportunity to make an appropriate designation of a voting representative. A designated voting representative must be someone who will not be voting another membership.

In the case of husbands and wives, there are two rules which allow either, but not both, to vote a single membership. In cases where the husbands and wives hold a joint membership, either may cast a vote on behalf of that membership. In the case of a single membership, held by either spouse, the nonmember spouse can cast a vote of the member spouse in the absence of the member spouse. In both situations, either but not both spouses may vote. Of course, if each spouse holds an individual membership, each is entitled to vote their own membership, but not the membership of an absent spouse.

Adhering to democratic principles is one of the key elements of cooperative governance. Doing so sets them apart from nearly all other business organizations. Maintaining a voting process in keeping with these democratic principles is a vital concern to all of the members.

- David Larson, Attorney

## Authorization to Vote

Organization (Corporation, Business, School, Church, etc)

Address

I, \_\_\_\_\_ attest that the above organization is a member of the Cooperative and has authorized me as their voting delegate to represent them on all matters of Oahe Electric Cooperative, Inc. at its 71st annual meeting of members on **August 20, 2022.**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

# Electrical safety basics for children

The back-to-school season is a time when parents and school children fall back into the familiar routine of getting up early, getting dressed, grabbing breakfast, preparing lunch and shuffling out the door each day.

It's a time when students return to a learning mindset, ready to take on new ideas, knowledge and information.

Parents should seize the opportunity to teach school-age children a valuable and potentially lifesaving lesson: Respect electricity.

Here are several electrical safety basics every child should know:

- Mixing water and electricity can be deadly. Teach children not to use electric toys or other devices near water or in the rain.
- Plugging multiple devices into a single outlet or power strip can create sparks and even cause a fire if that outlet can't handle the load. Teach kids to plug into surge-protected power strips or to use one device at a time and unplug the rest.

When they unplug those devices, they should grab them by the plug, not the cord. Yanking a cord out of an electrical outlet can damage the appliance, the outlet or the plug.

- Electrical cords can be strangling hazards and might cause electrical burns if they are misused. Make sure youngsters keep cords away from their mouths and necks. It's best to hide cords so they aren't a temptation.

- Electrical outlets are receptacles for electrical plugs only. Children should know from an early age that it's a no-no to put foreign objects or fingers into power plugs. Sticking any other items into an electrical socket can lead to electric shock or death. Use childproofing outlet covers.

- Flying kites and climbing trees are never safe activities near power lines. If a tree has a power line running through it - or if it's even within reach of the line - it's not a safe place to play. If a kite gets caught in a power line, the child should not tug on it to get it loose. The string could conduct electricity and seriously hurt the child.

- Electrical substations are fenced off to keep children and animals out of the area. If a toy or small pet gets inside the fence, the child should inform a parent or teacher, who can call a trained worker to come and retrieve it.

## COOPERATIVES HELP OUR MEMBERS SOLVE PROBLEMS



Electric co-op member services personnel focus their attention on making sure co-op members get the power they need when they need it. They help homeowners and businesses solve problems and find solutions to operate more efficiently. A group of co-op representatives recently took a guided tour of the Riverview Dairy near Watertown to learn how the dairy functions and how the local co-op can provide better service to the facility.

You can find out more about the many ways our electric cooperatives serve our members by visiting Cooperative Connections Plus. Simply scan the QR code at right.



## Swim safely

### Alayna Smith

Alayna, age 10, alerts both the young and old alike to refrain from swimming when any thunderstorms are around. Alayna is the daughter of Myles and Amber Smith and they are members of H-D Electric Cooperative based in Clear Lake.

Kids, send your drawing with an electrical safety tip to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3). If your poster is published, you'll receive a prize. All entries must include your name, age, mailing address and the names of your parents. Colored drawings are encouraged.



# TASTY SUMMER SALADS

## SHELL MACARONI SALAD

### Ingredients:

1 7-oz. box of shell macaroni,  
cooked, rinsed and cooled  
2-3 fresh tomatoes, chopped  
1/3 green pepper, chopped  
3 celery ribs, sliced thinly  
1/4 c. chopped onion  
1 cucumber, seeded & chopped

Toss ingredients together; set  
aside.

### Dressing

1/2 c. canola oil  
3/4 c. sugar  
1/2 c. vinegar  
3/4 c. catsup  
Dash of lemon juice

### METHOD

Mix dressing ingredients well  
with wire whip and add to  
veggies and macaroni.

**Joan Antonen, Arlington**

## TUNA AND EGG SALAD

### Ingredients:

3 6-oz. cans tuna packed in water  
3 eggs hard boiled, peeled and  
chopped  
2 small dill pickles diced  
1 large celery rib diced  
1/4 cup red onion minced  
1 tbsp. lemon juice or red wine  
vinegar  
2 tsp. garlic powder, optional  
1/4 tsp. salt, to taste  
Ground black pepper to taste  
1/2 cup plain Greek yogurt, 2%+  
fat  
2 tbsp. mayo

### METHOD

Drain cans with tuna well by  
pressing hard on the lid while  
draining. Transfer to a large bowl  
and separate into flakes with a  
fork. Add chopped and peeled  
hard boiled eggs, pickles, celery,  
red onion, lemon juice, garlic  
powder (if using), salt, pepper,  
yogurt and mayo. Stir well with a  
fork and refrigerate. Serve cold in  
a sandwich or over salad greens.  
**ifoodreal.com**

## GARDEN VEGGIES 'N ROTINI

### Ingredients:

3/4 c. oil  
3/4 c. white vinegar  
3/4 c. white sugar  
1 tsp. garlic salt  
2 tbsp. onion flakes  
1 tbsp. mustard  
Bring the above ingredients to a  
boil and remove from heat.  
Cook 4 cups colored rotini noo-  
dles. Rinse and chill.  
Cut up the following in chunky  
pieces:  
1 tomato  
1 cucumber  
assorted peppers  
1/2 red onion

### METHOD

Stir veggies together with the  
rotini and dressing. Chill before  
serving.

**Ginny Jensen, Volga**

## NANCY'S MACARONI SALAD

### Ingredients:

#### Dice:

1 onion  
1 green pepper  
1-2 carrots  
1 cup celery  
2 cups Velveeta Cheese

#### Add:

1 can peas  
1 - 16 oz. pkg. macaroni cooked  
and drained

### Dressing:

1 cup sugar  
1 pint mayo  
1 cup white vinegar  
1 - 14 oz. can evaporated milk

### METHOD

Mix together gently and  
refrigerate, best overnight. Add  
any type of meat, boiled eggs etc.,  
as desired.

**Nancy Nelson, Mission Hill**

Please send your favorite recipes to  
your local electric cooperative (address  
found on Page 3). Each recipe printed  
will be entered into a drawing for a  
prize in December 2022. All entries must  
include your name, mailing address,  
phone number and cooperative name.



## CONGRATULATIONS

Everyone at Oahe Electric would like to congratulate our General Manager Jordan Lamb and his wife Abbey on the birth of their son, Kannon Joe! Kannon was welcomed to the world in the early morning hours of June 27, and weighed 7 lbs. 14 oz. "No joys on earth bring greater pleasure than a little boy to love and treasure."  
- Congratulations Jordan and Abbey!

# The Trouble with Tankless

## Don't Be Fooled – Tankless Has Disadvantages



**Valerie Marso**

vmarso@  
oaheelectric.com

At first, it may sound like a great deal. It only runs when you need it. It takes up less space and promises to be better for the environment. But if you are thinking that installing a tankless water heater is the key to a huge savings on your electric bill, you may find that the cons outweigh the pros.

Tankless water heaters come with a high upfront purchase price (up to three times more than a traditional water heater) and installation cost. A traditional 50 gallon water heater uses about 4,500 watts or 4.5

kW to heat water for an entire home compared to a tankless system that can use as much as 36,000 watts or 36 kW. That is eight times the demand of a normal water heater! In fact, the amount of electricity needed to quickly heat water using a tankless system will rival the amount of power needed to power an entire home! This means that you may need to upgrade your electrical panel and your cooperative may need to upgrade your transformer size – both of which are costly items.

Tankless water heaters do not keep a supply of hot water ready and if you want to use hot water at several different points simultaneously, (dishwasher, shower, washing machine, etc.) there is a good chance that a tankless water heater will not be able to keep up with your needs.

At Oahe Electric, we do our best to provide you with information to help you make good decisions, save money and energy. If tankless water heaters truly were a great deal, we would definitely promote them. We will continue to advise a storage tank water heater connected to our load management program as the best solution for you and for your cooperative.

# THANK YOU

Thank you for your work Monday night (and always!)  
– Barb and Ernie Unruh

Dear Oahe Electric Round Up Committee,  
Thank you so much for your kindness and generosity to our family after our house fire. WE have been so blessed by the outpouring of support from this community! Thank you!!  
With Sincere Gratitude,  
Kurt, Shauna, Zach, Spencer and Levi Letellier

Dear Oahe Electric Cooperative,  
Thank you for this opportunity to receive this scholarship. It was very much appreciated.  
From  
Creed Schnee

Thank you for awarding me the Oahe Electric Cooperative Scholarship. I will apply it towards my tuition at Lake Area Technical College this fall.  
Sincerely,  
Matthew King

Dear Oahe Electric,  
Thank you for the gift! Your kindness as a co-op is inspirational. I am so thankful to be a part of Oahe Electric Cooperative.  
Thank you again,  
Kaelie Keiser

Dear Oahe Electric,  
You are amazing! Your graduation gift was so generous and unexpected! I want you to know that it is so very appreciated – as it will help me purchase the mechanics tools required for my Diesel Technology program, and I have been very stressed on how I am going to pay for them all! Your support means so much to me, and I am blessed by your generosity. Thanks for helping me make my education goals a reality!  
– Canyon Jones

On behalf of the Avera Foundation, thanks to you and Oahe Electric for your support of the Light the Way campaign! Your donation will enable us to continue our mission of creating a compassionate health care and healing ministry.  
May God bless you as you have blessed us,  
Walt

The wind blew  
The rains came  
The power went off  
Then back on  
THANK YOU for always giving exceptional service  
God's Blessings and our appreciation  
The Ranch Ministries Crew

## QUESTION OF THE MONTH

This month's question is: How many drive thru locations are there for your 71st Annual Meeting?

Please submit your answer via email to [oahe@oaheelectric.com](mailto:oahe@oaheelectric.com) with the subject line of "Question of the Month." A surprise gift will be sent to the winner!

## WINNER OF QUESTION OF THE MONTH

The Question of the Month winners for the June 2022 publication were Robert and Priscilla Hofer. They correctly answered the question "When are director petitions due?"

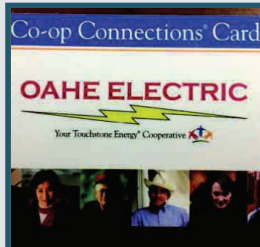
The answer was July 7, 2022.

Congratulations and we hope you enjoyed your prizes!

## LIKE US!

You can now keep in touch with your cooperative on Facebook! We will share with you the latest news, events, power outage updates, energy efficiency tips, money-saving rebates, load management information, legislative alerts, safety tips and much more!

We hope you "like" Oahe Electric Cooperative, Inc. on Facebook!



## Cooperative Connections Card Program Vendors

### Automotive

<b>Graham Tire Company</b>	605-224-8643	Pierre	Receive a 10% discount on regularly priced service work. Cannot be combined with any other offer.
<b>Lamb Motor Company</b>	800-952-2222	Onida	Receive a free alignment check with the purchase of 4 new tires.
<b>Napa Auto and Truck Parts/Farnam's Genuine Parts, Inc.</b>	605-224-8624	Pierre	Receive 10-50% off retail price.

### Food/Convenience Store

<b>Branding Iron Bistro</b>	605-494-3333	Pierre	Enjoy \$1 off your order. Limit one per visit.
<b>Gator's Pizza Pasta and Subs</b>	605-224-6262	Pierre	Purchase any large pizza at regular price and receive a FREE order of breadsticks.
<b>Grey Goose Store</b>	605-945-0794	Pierre	Receive a free 20 oz. fountain soda or coffee with the minimum of a \$30 gas or diesel purchase.
<b>The Corner</b>	605-258-2400	Onida	Buy one breakfast sandwich at regular price, get second half off.

### Health/Fitness and Beauty

<b>Anytime Fitness</b>	605-224-4011	Pierre	Receive a free two-week mini-membership.
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### Home/Garden

<b>Slumberland Furniture</b>	605-945-1997	Pierre	20% off any regular priced Lazy Boy items. Excluding special orders.
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### Services

<b>Inman's Water Technologies</b>	605-224-5111	Pierre	Receive a 10% discount on the rental price of a water softener and/or reverse osmosis drinking water system by paying a year in advance. Receive 10% off of the purchase price of a new water softener or reverse osmosis drinking water system when you mention this ad. Payments made by credit cards do not qualify for discounts/specials.
<b>Olson Plumbing Inc.</b>	605-224-6436	Pierre	\$50 discount on any electric boiler, Marathon water heater, or fireplace
<b>Small Engine House</b>	605-224-5815	Pierre	10% off parts and labor

### Sports/Recreation

<b>Teton River Traders Gun Shop LLC</b>	605-224-1371	Ft. Pierre	2% discount. Payments made by credit cards do not qualify for discount.
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### Retail

<b>Fastenal</b>	605-224-4060	Pierre	10% off of fasteners and 5% off on all other products
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# CO-OPS KEEP THE RALLY ROLLING



## Electric co-ops are committed to keeping The Rally energized

**Billy Gibson**

[billy.gibson@sdrea.coop](mailto:billy.gibson@sdrea.coop)

The frenetic atmosphere that has come to be associated with the annual Sturgis Motorcycle Rally can be loud, chaotic and - well let's just say - very colorful.

But behind those vivid scenes are electric cooperative employees working hard to make sure the Rally has the juice required to keep the lights glaring, the amps blaring, the air conditioners humming and the blenders blending.

The three local co-ops that serve the Black Hills and surrounding area are Butte Electric, West River Electric and Black Hills Electric. In conjunction with wholesale supplier Rushmore Electric in Rapid City and power generator Basin Electric based in Bismarck, N.D., the co-ops deliver much of the electricity used by campgrounds, restaurants, shops, concert stages, biker bars and other entertainment venues.

The power providers are diligent about keeping pace with the increasing growth of The Rally, which is rebounding from a temporary drop in attendance brought on by the coronavirus pandemic over the past two years.

Corey Trapp, chief engineering officer at Rushmore Electric, said power demand can increase significantly during The Rally. For instance, he indicated the area north of Sturgis served by Butte Electric that includes Full Throttle and other sites can jump from 1-2 MW to 8-9 MW during the event.

At the Buffalo Chip, West River Electric has nearly 40 meters located across the 600-acre spread serving scores of bars, campgrounds and cabins, as well as the main stage. Power use skyrockets from about 30 KW to more than 4.2 MW.

This year marks the 82nd installment of The Rally. Ten years ago, organizers were concerned about the potential future of the event if younger riders didn't start joining in on the fun. According to data gathered by local government agencies, Mount Rushmore National Park and other sources, attendance is back on the upswing.

An estimated 555,000 riders participated in the Rally last August, up nearly 14 percent from 2020 and an increase of 9.5 percent over the five-year average from 2016 to 2020.

Statistics show that nearly 30 percent of attendees were first-timers in 2021, which is welcomed news for promoters who work year-around to keep The Rally rolling, including



## RALLY FACTS

- 🏍️ 555,000 – No. of 2021 participants
- 🏍️ 54 – avg. age in 2019
- 🏍️ 46.5 – avg. age in 2021
- 🏍️ 52% - campground attendees
- 🏍️ 18% - hotel attendees
- 🏍️ \$81,005 - avg. household income
- 🏍️ \$382 - spent per day
- 🏍️ 85% - motorcycle owners
- 🏍️ 81% - Harley owners
- 🏍️ \$1,090,398 - raised for charity

the city of Sturgis, the South Dakota Department of Tourism, the Black Hills and Badlands Tourism Association and scores of business owners who depend on the seasonal revenue to sustain their operations.

The increased buzz of activity keeps the V-twin economic engines purring throughout the Black Hills area, but delivering the power has its own set of challenges that may not be apparent to partiers. Electric cooperative officials report that global shortages in materials and supplies make it difficult to meet the increase in power demand, but they're committed to doing everything possible to meet that demand.

"We're seeing delays in equipment necessary for infrastructure upgrades, but we know how important electricity is for The Rally to run successfully," said Brett Fosheim, director of operations at Butte Electric based in Newell. "A lot of visitors and business owners are

An estimated 555,000 visitors enjoyed the Sturgis Motorcycle Rally last year. As attendance climbs, electric cooperatives are committed to delivering the power needed to keep the party going. *Photos by South Dakota Travel*

depending on us, so we're prepared every year to step up to the plate with power that's affordable, reliable and there when everybody needs it."

Fosheim said just as organizers work all year long to plan and promote the 10-day event, electric cooperatives also anticipate the rise in electricity demand and coordinate with their common power generator, Basin Electric, to fill the need and handle peak loads. Butte Electric serves Full Throttle, Days Inn Campground and the Sons of Silence Campground, among other venues.

Because electric cooperatives are created by their members to serve their members, they've been delivering electricity since the early days of The Rally. The annual event traces its roots back to 1938 when a group of Indian Motorcycle enthusiasts led by local franchise owner Clarence "Pappy" Hoel got together to race one another, pull off some riding stunts and party together around a common interest in the brand.

What started as a quaint occasion called the Black Hills Classic with just

nine racers and a sparse crowd has become an international attraction.

Except for the World War II years between 1939 and 1941, The Rally has been a much-anticipated mainstay attracting visitors from across the planet. During the war, organizers suspended the event due to gas restrictions in support of the war effort.



While the current supply shortages mentioned by Fosheim have kept power providers on their toes and doubly prepared for The Rally, he said cooperatives are committed to delivering quality service not only during the event but long after the riders have peeled out of town.

# Your 2022 Annual Meeting

All registered members will receive a **\$40 BILL CREDIT!**

### DRIVE THRU

**TIME:** Come and go from 3-5 p.m.

**LOCATIONS:** (see right for maps and more details)

- **Blunt:** Oahe Electric Headquarters
- **Onida:** Sully Buttes High School
- **Pierre:** North of Hwy 14/83, off 293rd Ave./Williams St.

Register, receive cooperative reports, vote, get your bill credit and head for home! That quick and easy!

### IN PERSON

**TIME:** Registration, voting and refreshments from 3-5 p.m., followed by a business meeting at 5:15 p.m. (all ballots must be cast by 5 p.m.)

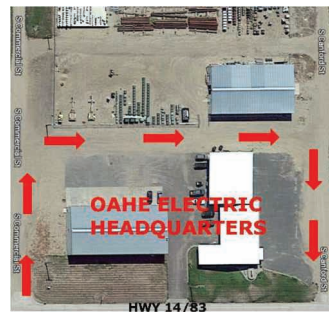
**LOCATION:** Sully Buttes High School Gym, Onida, S.D.

**ALL REGISTERED MEMBERS WILL BE ENTERED INTO DOOR PRIZE DRAWINGS FOR THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS' WORTH OF ADDITIONAL BILL CREDITS!**

## LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD

Vote for YOUR board of directors! View director candidate speeches prior to the meeting by visiting our Facebook page or [www.oaheelectric.com](http://www.oaheelectric.com).

## MEETING LOCATIONS



### Blunt Location

Turn south off HWY 14/83 onto S. Commercial St.

Proceed through Oahe Electric parking lot to register, vote, etc.

Exit onto HWY 14/83 via S. Canford St.

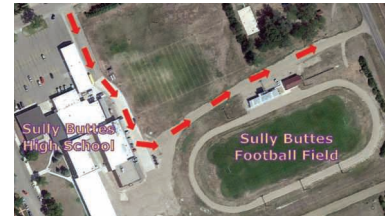


### Onida Location

Turn south off E. Dogwood Ave

Proceed through SBHS parking lot to register, vote, etc.

Exit onto S. 11<sup>th</sup> St.



### Pierre Location

Turn north off HWY 14/83 onto N. 293<sup>rd</sup> Ave./Williams St. (north of HWY across from Titan Machinery) – look for the Oahe Electric trucks

Turn where indicated to register, vote, etc.

Exit onto N. 293<sup>rd</sup> Ave./Williams St.

## Statement of Non-Discrimination

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# MEET YOUR 2022 DIRECTOR CANDIDATES

**James Feller and Troy Wiebe have both been nominated via petition for a three-year term as director on the Oahe Electric board.**



## **BOARD DIRECTOR CANDIDATE: JAMES FELLER**

### **What do you do for a living?**

I work for an animal health company calling on accounts in S.D./N.D. In addition, I farm/ranch south of Blunt and have a commercial pheasant hunting operation.

### **Tell us about your family:**

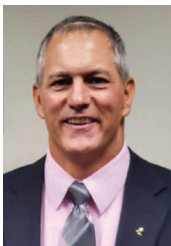
Married to Nancy for 33 years and have two daughters and two sons. All have graduated from college. In addition, we have a granddaughter and a grandson.

### **What inspired you to serve on the Oahe Electric Cooperative Board?**

Initially I was asked by the current Oahe Electric board to replace a director who had passed away and I really enjoyed the opportunity to serve and help keep electricity reliable yet affordable. I ran for a seat on the board and just celebrated my 25-year anniversary on Oahe Electric.

### **Give me three adjectives that "sum you up."**

Hard working, driven, and fiscally conservative.



## **BOARD DIRECTOR CANDIDATE: TROY WIEBE**

### **What do you do for a living?**

Currently, I am the Director of Education for the Pierre School District in which I am in my ninth year. In this role I am the director of special services as well as the curriculum director for the district. Prior to this I spent 15

years as the assistant principal and principal at Georgia Morse Middle School in Pierre.

### **Tell us about your family:**

Born and raised in Pierre I experienced a positive school experience and was exposed to all things outdoors and have found many enjoyable pastimes which keep me in central South Dakota. My wife of 26 years, Jeri, grew up in Blunt, S.D., and graduated from ABO School District in Onida. Her family continues to farm/ranch just outside of Blunt. Together, Jeri and I have three children. Our daughter Raegan, whom is the youngest is attending the University of South Dakota in Vermillion; Nicholas, our middle son works and resides in Pierre, and our oldest Kevin Peery and his wife Kara along with their daughter Rylee reside in Pierre. I also have a sibling that lives in Ft. Pierre and my mother who resides in the Spring Creek area on Lake Oahe. I also have another sibling that lives in M.N. We are very fortunate to have most of our family near as we enjoy time together as much as our busy schedules allow.

### **What inspired you to serve on the Oahe Electric Cooperative Board?**

Moving into the county in recent years and being new to an electric cooperative, I have learned more about how cooperatives function and co-exist with other providers. Also, learning of the importance of a well-managed cooperative and the dedicated staff it takes to make it all work effective and efficient. Having served on other boards and currently volunteering on two boards, I feel it is important to be involved. I understand policy reviews, the role of boards within an organization and the impact decisions made can have on employees and customers. Being in management roles in my occupation, one of the most important tasks is to hire good people, create a culture of integrity, and an environment where people want to work and serve their communities each day.

### **Give me three adjectives that "sum you up."**

**Diligent** - in that I am actively engaged in my work. I pay attention to details and take pride in doing things correctly. **Diligent** where I am going to do what I say I am going to do. **Focused** - I am persistent on completing a task and not getting derailed or giving up when difficult. Being able to stay focused on goals that may take weeks or months to accomplish and having the ability to problem solve through situations, seek new ideas from others, communicate and keep the end product in mind. **Empathy** - I am able to understand other's situations and opinions allowing me to gain perspective. With empathy, I can listen and understand issues, statements, concerns and build relationships with individuals in wide variety of settings.



# FAMILY FUN AT CATFISH BAY

Summer fun for the entire family awaits at Catfish Bay Water Ski Park in Sioux Falls. *Photos by Billy Gibson*

## Pigs fly and family fun abounds at Catfish Bay Water Ski Park

**Billy Gibson**

[billy.gibson@sdrea.coop](mailto:billy.gibson@sdrea.coop)

If you stop by Catfish Bay, you probably won't see a single catfish during your stay. But you will definitely see a pig flying, a chicken hurtling through the air and water skis sprouting up from a pocketful of magic seeds.

Catfish Bay Water Ski Park, located just off I-90 in Sioux Falls, is a family entertainment venue where a squad of highly skilled skiers leap and spin and build four-tier human pyramids as they skim across the water's surface.

Billed as "The Greatest Show on H<sub>2</sub>O," the event attracts spectators from miles around who show up each Friday evening during the summer months to see the high-flying theatrics reminiscent of Florida's famed Cypress Gardens. The show features ski jumpers dressed as chickens, Hee Haw-inspired corn pone humor and a daredevil in a pig costume elevating 30 feet into the air astride a water-propelled fly board.

The show is the brainchild of Jim

Bruns, an idea that spawned from his mind as "a God thing." While he was a college student in the early '90s, Bruns joined the Sioux Falls Water Ski Club and honed his skills enough to turn pro.

It was during college that he hatched a plan to establish a show similar to those being staged at SeaWorld and other similar sites. First thing he needed was a lake. He found the perfect spot when a contractor dug out a 25-acre borrow pit adjacent to the interstate. He bought the pit and – voila! – one man-made lake...just add water.

Second thing he needed was a performing cast. Bruns gathered some of his fellow skiers of all ages and sizes, pulled together a program and then plowed forward for a few years determined to make the show a success. Just when he began wondering if he was going to be able to keep the labor-intensive venture alive, he experienced another epiphany. He needed to rededicate the program to building youth, strengthening families and developing leaders. He formed a

mission statement: "MV2 – Mission, Vision and Values."

"It was a simple plan from the start," Bruns said just before the start of the season-opening show on Memorial Day. "But in 2007 I hit a wall. I sat down and prayed about it and came up with MV2. Now I have so many stories of kids who have come out here and learned a skill and learned about teamwork and goal-setting. They learn how to overcome obstacles."

One of those youngsters is Beth Bruggeman, who serves as assistant show director. A recent college graduate, she has been involved in the program for 10 years. She was a 13-year-old gymnast and cheerleader when she decided to try out for the ski team and now she's a star in the show with boundless energy, a beaming smile and a scar on her eyebrow as her personal badge of courage and grit.

"One of the things I like about it is there are people who participate of all skill levels who are anywhere from 6 to 60 years old. You don't find groups with that kind of diversity. You get to form different kinds of connections and friendships," she said.



Bruns' own children, James and Amara, are two other stars of the show. Amara, 13, professes to be the more gushingly dramatic. A student at O'Gorman Junior High, Amara has been part of the act since she was 2, riding on her dad's shoulders. Today she barefoots, swivels, climbs the pyramid and charms the crowd with her effervescent smile.

"I like entertaining people and making them feel like they've come to a special place," she said.

Beside Bruns, Jeremiah Newman is another example of the motto: the family that skis together stays together. He and his children, 14-year-old Marissa and 12-year-old Tyler, are involved in all aspects of the show. He's a member of the military and a former international professional skier who still competes around the region and specializes in performing flips and twists on an air chair hydrofoil.

"This is such a family-friendly environment. It's priceless. It keeps me active and it keeps our family close. Instead of sitting on the sidelines watching my kids, I get to be out there with them," he said. "We talk about the importance of making a life-long commitment to fitness and good nutrition and things that will serve them well along the way."

While the skiers are preparing for their next set, attention turns toward the stage area and a charming recurring character named Norman, who always comes up with some crackpot scheme that never fails to fail. Bruns explains that the Norman character stands as a metaphor for anyone who has had a dream and felt the frustration of failure.

"The thing about Norman that makes him different is that he never loses his enthusiasm and keeps on trying," Bruns said. "His motto is to dream big and never give up."

Bruns is living out the dream he had as a younger man. To this point, Norman has never revealed his last name. But it could very well be Bruns.

Below, Catfish Bay performers pull off a "four-stack" configuration. At right, the character known as "Norman" rides a flying pig.







# TOUCHSTONE SUPPORTS H.S. RODEO

The Touchstone Energy flag has flown proudly at the last 20 State High School Rodeo Finals. *Photos by Billy Gibson*

## Electric co-ops support high school rodeo through popular Short Go Shirt program

**Billy Gibson**

[billy.gibson@sdrea.coop](mailto:billy.gibson@sdrea.coop)

Folks who attended the State High School Rodeo Finals in Fort Pierre this summer could see Tobi Hintz coming from halfway across the arena.

Hintz is a student at Timber Lake High School and serves as the association's 2022 Rodeo Queen. She cut a dashing figure at the event with her decorative sash, bright red lipstick, fringed shoulder bag, buckle-shaped sterling silver earrings and baby blue cowgirl hat with a sparkling tiara wrapped above the brim.

Oh, and she can also ride pretty well, too. Over the past two years, she's earned Touchstone Energy Short Go Shirts at the state finals in recognition of her rodeo skills in barrel racing and pole bending.

This year marked the 20th celebration of the Touchstone Energy Short Go

Shirt program. Since 2002, Touchstone Energy cooperatives have donated more than \$140,000 towards the program that honors contestants who make it to the Short Go round of the state finals competition in their respective events.

This year in Fort Pierre, 145 student-athletes visited the Touchstone Energy booth to sign up for their shirts, which will be embroidered with the TSE logo and delivered to contestants this fall.

While Hintz has a bubbly personality and a flair for fashion, she takes pride in wearing her two Short Go Shirts that identify her as an accomplished competitor.

"It's so cool and it's such an honor to win a Short Go Shirt," she said. "It's so unique for us competitors because I don't know how many states actually get the opportunity to receive something like this. Every contestant appreciates it. The more shirts the merrier!"

Tobi, a national finalist in the rodeo

queen competition two years ago, has been involved in rodeo from a young age and said she likes the friendships that are forged with her peers.

"You meet so many people and make so many friends. Sometimes you wonder why you're doing it, but then you learn that there's a rhyme and reason for all the chaos and madness," she said.

Ann Sundermann has served as executive secretary for the High School Rodeo Association for the past 17 years. She describes the level of enthusiasm surrounding the TSE Short Go program that she's experienced over the years.

"Winning one of these shirts is the thing the kids anticipate the most," Sundermann said during a brief pause in the rodeo action. "We'll have 40 kids coming into the office asking where do they sign up for their Short Go Shirts. Then once they've been ordered they want to know when is their Short Go Shirt coming in. All the kids know about Touchstone because they've seen these shirts for the past 20 years."





Over the past 20 years, electric cooperatives have distributed more than 3,200 Short Go Shirts.

Sundermann said she's seen a lot of value from the program that demonstrates the electric cooperative system's ongoing involvement in youth development, education, sports activities and overall community support.

"It's been a privilege to work with the local electric cooperatives. They take pictures of the kids with their shirts and run them in their magazines and the kids send the pictures to us. They give the kids a lot of recognition for all their hard work and all they've achieved. With the commitment cooperatives have to their communities and their support for this outstanding program, I think it's a great long-term partnership and we look forward to continuing for many years to come," she said.

Marty Philips is public relations coordinator for the association. He noted that Short Go Shirts don't spend much time stashed away and gathering dust in the closet.

"The shirts get worn out because the kids wear them constantly. They're right at the front of their closets. It's such a great honor for them. They wear them to work, they wear them to school, they wear them to college and even when they're adults. I see them all over the state," Philips said. "They wear them

with pride because they know they earned it and they know they did the work to make it to the Short Go round. A lot of kids think it's better than a buckle. We appreciate what TSE has done for the kids because that's what this is all about, it's all about the kids. Everything we do is for the kids."

Todd Eliason, a recent retiree from Rushmore Electric in Rapid City who administered the program for Touchstone Energy since it began in 2002, said he looked forward to working with rodeo organizers and the student-athletes each year.

"These kids are our future, and to see how goal-oriented and determined they are and to see how hard they work, it really makes you feel positive about the future," he said.

Eliason cited Layni Stevens as a prime example. Not only did Layni earn a Short Go Shirt but she also punched her ticket to the national event in Gillette, W.Y., by finishing first in the girl's cutting competition.

**"It's such an honor to receive a Short Go Shirt. The more shirts, the merrier!"**

*- Rodeo Queen Tobi Hintz*

"I'm just grateful to be at the finals and it's an even greater blessing to get to wear a Short Go Shirt," Layni said. "It's one of your goals to get to the Short Go round. Sometimes it doesn't always go your way, but to know you get the reward of getting a shirt is just really cool. You can wear it all year long, to all kinds of events and to college."

To see a video of the event, visit [www.youtube.com/watch?v=iT-oZ1Oxn7o](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iT-oZ1Oxn7o)





## REGISTER TO WIN!

Bring this coupon and mailing label to the Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives booth at Dakotafest or the South Dakota State Fair to win a prize!

Your Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Your E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**AUGUST 16-18**  
**Dakotafest**

*Photo Credit: AFBF photo/Philip Gerlach*



To have your event listed on this page, send complete information, including date, event, place and contact to your local electric cooperative. Include your name, address and daytime telephone number. Information must be submitted at least eight weeks prior to your event. Please call ahead to confirm date, time and location of event.

To view the publication's master event calendar, scan the QR code below:



Or visit <https://sdrea.coop/cooperative-connections-event-calendar> to view more upcoming events.

**JULY 27-31**  
**South Dakota Summer Spotlight - Livestock Show**  
State Fair Grounds, Huron, SD, 605-222-9561

**JULY 29-31**  
**Badlands Astronomy Festival**  
Ben Reifel Visitor Center, Interior, SD, 605-433-5243

**JULY 29-31**  
**Bruce Honey Days**  
Various Locations, Bruce, SD, 605-627-5671

**JULY 29-31**  
**Paha Sapa Cowboys and Indians Art Festival**  
Outlaw Square, Deadwood, SD, 605-578-1876

**JULY 30**  
**South Dakota Chislic Festival**  
Prairie Arboretum, Freeman, SD, sdchislicfestival.com

**AUGUST 5-6**  
**Foothills Days and Rockin' Ribfest**  
Citywide, Wessington Springs, SD, 605-539-1929

**AUGUST 5-7**  
**Sioux River Folk Festival**  
Newton Hills State Park, Canton, SD, facebook.com/SDFOTM/

**AUGUST 5-13**  
**Sioux Empire Fair**  
W.H. Lyon Fairgrounds, Sioux Falls, SD, siouxempirefair.com

**AUGUST 5-14**  
**Sturgis Motorcycle Rally**  
Main St., Sturgis, SD, sturgismotorcyclerrally.com

**AUGUST 11-13**  
**Clay County Fair**  
515 High St., Vermillion, SD, claycountyfair.net

**AUGUST 12-14**  
**Fort Pierre Trader Days**  
Various Locations, Fort Pierre, SD, 605-412-8549

**AUGUST 15-21**  
**Brown County Fair**  
400 24th Ave. NW, Aberdeen, SD, browncountysdfair.com

**AUGUST 19-21**  
**Black Hills Threshing Bee**  
13380 Alkali Road, Sturgis, SD, 605-490-2024

**AUGUST 19-21**  
**Yankton Riverboat Days**  
Citywide, Yankton, SD, riverboatdays.com

**AUGUST 19-27**  
**Central States Fair and Rodeo**  
800 San Francisco St., Rapid City, SD, centralstatesfair.com

**AUGUST 24-28**  
**Corn Palace Festival**  
604 N Main St., Mitchell, SD, 605-995-8430

**AUGUST 24-28**  
**Kool Deadwood Nites**  
Citywide, Deadwood, SD, 605-578-1876

**AUGUST 25-28**  
**Prairie Village Steam Threshing Jamboree**  
45205 SD Hwy. 34, Madison, SD, 605-256-3644

**AUGUST 26-27**  
**Hill City Wine, Brew and BBQ**  
Elm St., Hill City, SD, hillcitywinebrewandbbq.com

**AUGUST 26-27**  
**Sizzlin' Summer Nights**  
Main St., Aberdeen, SD, 605-226-3441

**AUGUST 26-28**  
**Fall River Hot Air Balloon Festival**  
Various Locations, Hot Springs, SD, fallriverballoonfest.com

**AUG. 30-SEPT. 4**  
**Sturgis Mustang Rally**  
Thunderdome, Sturgis, SD, sturgismustangrally.com

**SEPTEMBER 1-5**  
**South Dakota State Fair**  
890 3rd St. SW, Huron, SD, sdstatefair.com

**Note: Please make sure to call ahead to verify the event is still being held.**